

NATURAL CURIOSITY.—Recently, while the workmen of Mr. Harvey, of Glasgow, were cutting a log of Honduras, of about 19 feet and 22 inches in diameter, they were surprised to find, in the very centre of an otherwise excellent piece of wood, about 15 feet from the root, a bullock of 4 feet long by 9 inches wide, and tapering down towards the bottom. In the centre of this space they were still more astonished to discover what had been an entire hive of bees, with plentiful remains of bees, bees-wax, and a number of large cells, in each of which the honey in a solid state, something similar to the kernel of a nut, is still entire. On the discovery being made, Mr. Harvey paid attention to cut the log carefully around, and to preserve every portion of the wood which contained the hive, and it is now exceedingly interesting to trace the winding path of the bees all along the edge of the tree as long as its growth would permit, until at last they were fairly enclosed by the growth, and their industry put an end to for ever. Very little seems to be known of the age of the mahogany, but we should suppose that the tree in question may be about 300 years old.

INCE BLUNDELL.—On Monday, the 16th ultimo, the foundation-stone of a new school was laid. At the ceremony there were present, besides Thomas Weld Blundell, Esq., and lady, and chaplain, the Blundell family of Crosby Hall; John Vaughan, Esq., of Courtfield, and lady; Miss Cordova, the Very Rev. H. Brewer; Rev. Mr. Brown, &c. Mr. Mackrell, of Bootle, is the contractor. The following, with other memorials, was deposited:—"D. O. M. Lapidem primarium bulus Scholæ posuit Domina Teresia Weld Blundell an. salut. 1843, die 16a Octob. Gregoria 16a Petri sedem, tremente, Victoria regnante, Reverendissimo domino Gregorio, Episcopo Hibernie districtum Lancastrensem gubernante, Dono. Ignatio Greenough O. S. B. pastorem curam exerceente, Architecto L. I. Scotes. Hanc Scholam exaragna Floris stercus annabibus dovati Carolus Robertus Blundell, arm. pro ejusdem erectioe situm dedit Thoma Weld Blundell, arm. pecuniis suppeditavit Martinus Billington, Paleo. Predicant Deus, et benedixit in bonorum nominis sui."

WORK FOR CHURCH BUILDERS AT HONG KONG.—It is said that the only places of worship in Hong Kong are a Catholic church and an American meeting-house.

It is said that prior to the passing of the Reform Bill, there was in Cornwall or Devonshire, in one of the small little boroughs of that period, a learned French reading, who had been mayor during the period of the French war, when an invasion of our coast was dreaded, and that when instructions were received by him from government that he should put the fortifications of his borough into proper condition, he was sorely puzzled to make out the meaning of the word; he conferred with the ex-mayor, and was little better for their united cogitations. The joke runs that some wags relieved him by explaining that one fortification meant two twentifications.

DURATION OF THE PYRAMID.—The reason of the duration of the pyramid, above all other forms, is that it is most fitted to resist the force of gravitation; thus the pyramids of Egypt are the oldest monuments in the world.

CRICKETS AND BLACK BEETLES.—"A Manchester builder," writing to the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, says, "the principal cause of these insects abounding in houses is, that the kitchen flags are generally laid upon common cinders. If black sand from the iron foundries be made use of, nothing will live amongst it; as I have proved by many years' experience."

A CHEAP GREEN PAINT.—Gao tar mixed with yellow ochre makes an excellent green paint, well adapted for preserving coarse wood-work and iron rails.

The bridges of Paris have been nearly all externally repaired and cleaned. The Ponts d'Austerlitz and Louis Philippe have had their wood-work repaired; the Pont Rouge has been reconstructed; the Pont Carrousel has been freshly painted; and the Pont Royal and the Pont de la Concorde have been cleaned and arranged with Roman cuneus.

It is proposed to raise the sum of 50,000l. on the principle of a Tontine, for the completion of the plan of the Prince's Park, Liverpool, begun with so much spirit, and at so great an expense, by Mr. R. V. Yates.

The alterations in Chester Cathedral, preparatory to the erection of a new organ, have commenced.

No! is a useful word—it is not afraid to use it. Many a man has plied in misery for years, for not having courage to pronounce that little unsatisfactory.

Iron and platinum are the only metals that can be welded.

TENDERS.

AMOUNT of Tenders delivered for building three third-rate houses in William-street, Islington, Chelsea, for Mr. Clayton, the size of each house 26 feet by 17 feet, consisting of two kitchens, shops, and parlour, one and two pair stories, area 2 feet 6 inches wide, and two vaults 6 feet deep in front of the house, and area 2 feet 6 inches wide, and garden ground 6 feet wide, with fence walling round—same at back. The houses to include papering, and every other thing complete, stores only excepted.

Lucas	£1,456
Gerry	1,197
Macey	1,125
Neay	1,100
Peck	965
Brighton	927
Dennis and Price	925

The tenders were opened in the presence of the parties.

TENDERS delivered Friday, November 3, for three houses, to be built opposite the Sutton Arms, Holloway.—Mr. Norman, Surveyor.

Douglas	£1,197
Clarey	1,125
McGill	1,100
Peck	965
Brighton	927
Dennis and Co.	925

NOTICES OF CONTRACTS.

THE following contracts are advertised in different papers, and we have kept a register of the particulars of each at the office, which may be referred to on application. In the continuation of this plan, which we flatter ourselves will be of service to our readers, material assistance will be rendered by the forwarding of papers from our country friends, or by any other means of notification of which they may choose to avail themselves.

BRITISH OAK TIMBER, &c.—14,000 loads of balk, 5,000 loads of plank, 400,000 British Oak Treasures.—Secretary of the Admiralty, Somerset House. Dec. 19.

BOSTON CHURCH, LINCOLN-HIRE.—Repairs and restoration.—Mr. Scott, architect.—Messrs. White and Lindsay, Boston; J. T. White, Hon. Secretary. Nov. 27.

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY TERMINUS, DOVER.—Mr. Lewis Cubitt, 71, Great Russell-street; the Chairman and Directors, London Bridge. Nov. 20. Building a Sewer, Basinghall-street, City.—Sewer Office, Guildhall.—Joseph Daw, Prin. Clerk. Nov. 14, 1843.

Building a Sewer, Freetown-lane and Taylor's-court, Bow-lane, City.—Sewers Office, Guildhall.—Joseph Daw, Prin. Clerk. Nov. 14, 1843.

NEW MARKET AND ENTRANCE, CARMARTHEN.—Mr. Francis E. H. Fowler, architect, 105, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury; Town Clerk's Office, Carmarthen. Nov. 20.

ST. OLAV'S CHURCH.—RESTORATION.—Mr. George Allen, architect, 69, Tooley-street, South-west; George R. Corner, Vestry Clerk. Nov. 28. Paint ingredients.—Navy Department, Dockyards. Secretary of the Admiralty, Somerset House. November 21.

COOKING APPARATUS for 900 inmates, Bermondsey Workhouse.—B. Drew, Clerk. November 21.

COMPETITIONS.

District Surveyor for the metropolitan parishes of St. George-the-Martyr, and St. Andrew, Holborn-where-the-Bars, and the Liberty of the Rolls.—Tendronsals to be sent in up to 30th December. Election next January Sessions.—C. H. Ellis, Clerk of the Peace.

Design for a testimonial to the late G. Clendinning, Esq., to be executed at Westport, at a price of 800 guineas.—Dr. Dillon, Infirmary, Castlebar, Mayo, 20 guineas, Jan. 1, 1844.

Premium of a gold medal or money for the best mode of cleansing streets.—March 1, 1844. J. N. G. Gutch, 20, Vane-street.

LEVANTINE ASYLUM, MELTON, SUFFOLK.—Plans, specifications, and estimates for enlargement.—John Henry Borton, Clerk of the Peace. Nov. 18.

SURVEY MAP AND APPORTIONMENT.—Parish of Thelbridge, Devon, 1,732 acres.—Mr. William Comins, Solicitor, Wetherbridge-street, Crediton. November 16.

SURVEY MAP AND APPORTIONMENT.—Parish of Cornworthy, Devon, 2,200 acres.—Mr. John Elliott, Allsleigh, in Torment. Nov. 20. Earl of Leicester's Monument, at Hotham, cost 4,000 guineas.—R. N. Bacon, Hon. Secretary. Dec. 27.

Surveyor for the Borough of Stamford. Salary 30l. per annum.—Harvard Thompson, Clerk to the Commissioners. November 14.

We beg to announce to such of our friends as were disappointed in obtaining impressions of No. 36, containing the large Engraving of the Infant Orphan Asylum at Wantstead, that having completed the reprint of that Number, orders sent to the Office will meet with immediate attention.

SUMMARY OF CORRESPONDENCE.

WOOD PAVEMENTS.—"A Constant Reader" remarks on the unsatisfactory and "poor start of the wood pavements—a perfectly dry or perfectly wet condition being, as he remarks, indispensable to safe traffic by horses, and therefore the use of sweeping machines which promised so much is hardly available, as he thinks, except in dry or summer weather. He suggests the Russian method of coating with pitch and gravel. Something must be done, and various remedies are proposed. He takes note of a correspondent as to showing the horses, which will appear at the first necessity. The Wood Paving Association may produce some thing valuable out of the competition they have invited for a cleaning machine. We look with interest to some useful and practical solution of this vexing question.

"G. R. W." makes some very just observations in reference to the mischievous operation of the facet laws regarding windows. The tax on all windows above a certain number, being, as he remarks, a tax on public health, or upon light and air, the main constituents of health, and a tax most unjust in the rule of application, inasmuch as by taking the number of windows and not the superficial feet of glass, it gives the wealthy every advantage over the poorer and trading classes—the small window of the latter being assessed at the same rate as the large window of the former.

"An Architect and Suburbanist."—In his comment on the Sussex Memorial design of Mr. Hamerton, questions the propriety of its much ado in behalf of his late Royal Highness, and complains that the design falls very far short of what might have been expected from "a man of standing and character;" the "style and imagination of the design is much at fault," coupled with his incorrect taste as regards proportion. "The result of the mixture of various styles he likens to a man's uttering every alternate word in a different language, and that the opinion thus to be formed of his character is, that 'it is really, pomp, and show, and egregious folly the principal ingredient.'" "What," says he, "is a particular style of architecture, but the symbol of the character of a nation? Where can he find out the simplicity and luxury of the Roman—where the simple grandeur of the Greek—or where the bounteous frivility of the painted style?" "The architecture," he says, "is subversive to the sculpture, instead of the reverse. Here the whole is cut up and defaced for the simple purpose of claiming originality, and how signally has it failed." He urges the more fitting character of the Chorgic monument of Lynceus—in its "classic beauty, Greek simplicity, and imposing grandeur"—and although he would not advocate the copying altogether the works of the ancients, he regrets our being so backward, that we need "look with awe and reverence upon them, and sorrowfully reflect upon our own want of invention and talent in designing." He concludes by disclaiming any praise against the author, or interest in the work, and trusts that whatever is erected may be "worthy of the architects of the nation to which we are indebted; and of the present painful days of architects and architecture." We have thus with praise given the marrow of his critique, which may remain its own period for any remarks it may call for in reply.

WATER CONTRIBUERS.—"J. Forster" recommends the adoption of superficial area or lead external at the tops of houses used in progress of building, instead of below stairs, or in the open air in the garden, exposed to freezing, providing the water supply be equal to the height. He has adopted the plan himself, laying on the water to each story, the first cut being inconsiderable compared with the comfort and convenience, the saving to servants, avoiding the running up and down stairs with pails and pails of water, &c., and the supply of boilers on the upper story for warm baths, &c.

WOODEN PAVEMENT.—"Mr. Brodum Jones" writes in explanation and commendation of the plan of wood pavement pursued by the Metropolitan Company: The grand desideratum, he declares to be the concrete foundation, composed of blue lime and metallic sand, a matter we advertised in its treating of the *Metropolitan Company* memo. back. He describes the character of the block and mode of laying, dwelling, &c., upon the advantages, which consist of connection and a distribution of the effect of pressure and permeation, and that it withstands exposure.